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S U/17957-0015

EXAMINER  
GREGORY, B

22M2/0730

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2202

DATE MAILED: 07/30/96

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This is a communication from the examiner in charge of your application.  
COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS

☒ This application has been examined ☐ Responsive to communication filed on \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ This action is made final.

A shortened statutory period for response to this action is set to expire 3 month(s), \_\_\_\_\_ days from the date of this letter.  
Failure to respond within the period for response will cause the application to become abandoned. 35 U.S.C. 133

**Part I THE FOLLOWING ATTACHMENT(S) ARE PART OF THIS ACTION:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited by Examiner, PTO-892. | 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsman's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948. |
| 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of Art Cited by Applicant, PTO-1449.      | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application, PTO-152.       |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Information on How to Effect Drawing Changes, PTO-1474.     | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> _____   |

**Part II SUMMARY OF ACTION**

1. ☒ Claims 1-46 are pending in the application.

Of the above, claims \_\_\_\_\_ are withdrawn from consideration.

2. ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ have been cancelled.

3. ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are allowed.

4. ☒ Claims 1-46 are rejected.

5. ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are objected to.

6. ☐ Claims \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction or election requirement.

7. ☐ This application has been filed with informal drawings under 37 C.F.R. 1.85 which are acceptable for examination purposes.

8. ☐ Formal drawings are required in response to this Office action.

9. ☐ The corrected or substitute drawings have been received on \_\_\_\_\_. Under 37 C.F.R. 1.84 these drawings are ☐ acceptable; ☐ not acceptable (see explanation or Notice of Draftsman's Patent Drawing Review, PTO-948).

10. ☐ The proposed additional or substitute sheet(s) of drawings, filed on \_\_\_\_\_, has (have) been ☐ approved by the examiner; ☐ disapproved by the examiner (see explanation).

11. ☐ The proposed drawing correction, filed \_\_\_\_\_, has been ☐ approved; ☐ disapproved (see explanation).

12. ☐ Acknowledgement is made of the claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. 119. The certified copy has ☐ been received ☐ not been received ☐ been filed in parent application, serial no. \_\_\_\_\_; filed on \_\_\_\_\_.

13. ☐ Since this application appears to be in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under Ex parte Quayle, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

14. ☐ Other

**EXAMINER'S ACTION**

1. The Petition to Make Special of May 8, 1996 has been GRANTED.
2. Claims 1-46 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

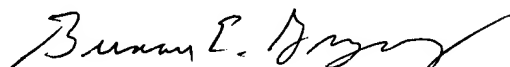
Throughout claims 1-46, each of the uses of "can" is indefinite and unclear in that "can" merely expresses potential. Throughout claims 1-46, the uses of the following are unclear: "authority"; "authorities"; "levels of authorities"; "first level of authority"; "higher authority"; and, "higher level authority". It is further pointed out that it is unclear what difference there is between "higher authority" and "higher level authority". On lines 13-14 of independent claim 1, it is unclear what the subject of the verb "including" is. In part (d) of claim 1, the language is indefinite and unclear in that no method steps are claimed to achieve the desired results expressed in the phrase "in order to keep ... to certify". In part (e) of claim 20, it is unclear if the phrase "the information that is **stored**" refers back to "information to be **saved**" in claim 20. In part (e) of claim 20, the claim language is indefinite and unclear in that no method steps are claimed that achieve the desired result s expressed in the phrase "wherein ... of the witness". On lines 16-17 of independent claim 23, it is unclear what the subject of the verb "including" is. In part (e) of independent claim 23, the language is indefinite and unclear in there are no method steps to achieve the desired results expressed in the phrase "to

keep ... to certify". Dependent claims 2-22 and 24-46 are unclear in that they depend from unclear independent claims 1 and 23.

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Foster et al (U.S. Patent 4,888,801) is of general interest for showing key certification in a hierarchical arrangement. Camion et al (U.S. Patent 5,097,504) and Chaum (U.S. Patent 4,926,480) are both of general interest for using partial digital signatures. In Camion et al (U.S. Patent 5,097,504), please note column 6, lines 41-57 and claim 11. In Chaum (U.S. Patent 4,926,480), please note claim 3.

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Bernarr Gregory whose telephone number is (703) 306-4153 and whose FAX number is (703) 306-4195.



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PRIMARY EXAMINER  
GROUP 2200

beg  
July 26, 1996